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Covington Ia, Sep. 30. 54

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Dear Friend Garrison: I am much obliged for the frank manner in which you answered my letter. We shall start in a few days with our Panorama, for Chicago, and endeavor to work our way East. I have no doubt as to the general character of our painting being such, as to receive the award of real merit any where. It has already received it, even from Pro-Slavery communities, in La Fayette, Indianapolis &c., where cultivated tastes are quite abundant. That it has faults we know, as what painting has not? It is the work of one, who has had little but his own genius to instruct him. But I am very anxious to get it into an Anti-Slavery atmosphere, where the moral teaching it contains can be more fully appreciated, and if it would not be asking too much of you, I would like you to notice it in the "Liberator", as far as the recommendations I sent you will allow, so that communities where your paper circulates may know such a thing is in existence. The world, you know is full of humbug, and even those interested in the subject, will stand aloof for fear of being imposed upon. The Anti-Slavery cause, like the temperance, is growing in popular favor, and will be seized upon by many mercenary persons, as an instrument merely to get money.

Although as I before said, I wish to do well with our painting in this respect, as duty to myself & family requires it, yet I hope ever to keep in view the nobler object, of creating a healthy public opinion for the cause of the slave. You know but little of my history, but, if it will not seem egotistical, I can say, that never, since my boyhood, when I aided in organizing the Clarkson Anti-Slavery Society in Penn, have I forgotten the wrongs of the slave, or my duty to aid in his emancipation While others have faltered, and trimmed to the popular breeze, I have, though tempted by the wiles of party, and the lucre of office, stood fast against a mountain of poverty, and a host of pro-slavery opposition, stood firm to the slave, I speak thus in candor and honesty, and hope it will be so taken. At the risk of tiring your patience, I will give you a little history of the cause in this region. Ten years since I came to this County, then I believe the only exponent of the principles of the A. Society in it. Pro-Slavery was then rampant here, as it is still; but mark what a change has come over it. Then I was persecuted as an abolitionist infidel &c, and am still, then our county gave some 800 Democratic(!!) majority, and this fall I think it will give at least 200 against the Nebraska swindle. Now though opposition to this bill, is very poor abolition, it is much better than of old. Now people are talking and thinking, men who ten years ago would have aided in hanging me, now are my best friends, though they still think me crazy on the question of Slavery. In 1848, when to advocate abolition, was to call down all that was vile, I gathered around me ~~less~~ fewer supporters than did Christ at Jerusalem, & went forth to preach Anti-Slavery, under the garb of free soilism, though having no faith in that, or any political party, doing any thing for the slave, as a party, I "took the stump," and thereby gained the ears of hundreds who would not have listened to an Anti-Slavery lecture.

Now the acorn has grown to be a gigantic tree; although open abolition is yet unpopular, and what few of us there are, looked upon as mad. The two extremes have met here, as in many other places. Those who oppose Slavery & its extension from duty & right, and those who oppose it from selfishness & hatred to the niggers". But I cannot but feel that good must come of the present agitation; that this turmoil and excitement will finally bring about that higher state of public opinion, wherein all who honestly follow the right, will be satisfied, that no permanent good for the overthrow of Slavery, or the quieting of agitation on the subject, can come, so long as we fall down and worship the Golden Image which the organisers of our government set up. Men must see eventually, that so long as we uphold a Union cemented by the blood of millions of crushed hearts, the warfare can have no end, but the ~~warfare~~ strife between the antagonistic elements of the government go on forever, until one or the other is subdued. They will find, that all compromises will not even "scotch" the viper, much less kill it. For this reason I feel no interest in the present uproar about the Missouri Compromise, for believing both the first & last movement in relation to it, i.e. that of 1820 & 54 originated with the Devil, how could I feel otherwise. But I say, all hail to the excitement, as a means to bring home the iniquity of this nation & of bringing the North to a speedy repentance, for the South I do not think ever will repent. I have just been reading Wise's(!) tissue of folly and wickedness. Better this than Northern flunkeyism. Hoping you will excuse this long epistle, and that you will find it good to close as I have started I remain your friend L Lamborn

(W. L. Garrison.)